

Region 1

Upcoming Public Events

- On October 12th, the EPA/State Quality Assurance Roundtable Meeting will be held at the EPA laboratory in Chelmsford, MA. The meeting will be attended by representatives from the New England states, NYDEC and NEIWPCC. Agenda topics include Citizen Science, Method Update Rule and Quality Assurance Project Plans under Performance Partnership Agreements.

Region 2

Hot Issues:

Hurricane Irma/Maria: Over the past week, additional EPA response personnel and equipment have been able to reach the islands; we now have about 84 responders on the ground in PR and USVI. However, while flights have become more readily available, lodging remains a severe constraint, limiting the number of personnel we are able to send down. We expect to reach close to 200 personnel by mid-October. Our response personnel have been and will continue to conduct assessments of drinking water and wastewater facilities; oil and Superfund sites; regulated facilities; and potential debris collection and management locations. Particularly in PR, raw sewage discharges to inland and coastal surface waters, including into waterbodies upstream of drinking water intakes, pose risks to residents using surface waters for bathing. EPA is working with CDC and the PR DOH to urge them not to bath in these waters.

Upcoming:

RA will travel to PR and USVI. Incoming R2 Regional Administrator Peter Lopez will travel to PR and USVI during the week of October 16, accompanied by DRA Catherine McCabe. He has already had several press interviews focusing on response to storm damage from the hurricanes.

VW settlement funding: On 10/2/17 a federal court finalized the trust agreement for \$2.9 billion in Volkswagen settlement funding. This starts the 60-day clock for states to certify eligibility for project funding. Under the consent decrees, New York can receive nearly \$128 million, New Jersey over \$72 million, and Puerto Rico over \$8 million. R2 is communicating with the PR Environmental Quality Board to assist and ensure that the necessary documentation to access these funds is completed on time.

Consent Decrees (CDs) in 2 CERCLA Cases: **(1)** On 9/29 a CD was signed with 9 PRPs (including private companies and municipalities). The settlors will implement the remedy for Operable Unit 4 of the Kentucky Avenue Well Field site (known as Koppers Pond) in Horseheads, NY. The pond is contaminated with PCBs and heavy metals. The remedy includes placement of a geotextile membrane and six-inch soil/sand cap on the pond bottom, at an estimated cost of \$1.9 million. The settlors will also reimburse 100% of EPA's future response costs; EPA agreed to forgive certain past costs associated with the oversight of the OU4 remedial investigation and feasibility study. **(2)** On 9/29 the District Court for the Southern District of NY entered a CD between the U.S. and 3 PRPs for the Port Refinery site, located in a residential neighborhood of Rye Brook, NY. EPA incurred response costs conducting a removal action to address significant mercury contamination. These 3 PRPs will pay a total of \$151,503; EPA is continuing its cost recovery efforts against additional PRPs for the Site.

Region 4

Hot Issues

Mississippi Phosphates Corporation (Pascagoula, MS) Tropical Storm Preparedness

Key Message: On October 5, 2017, Region 4 initiated a bypass at the facility in anticipation of exceeding the on-site storage capacity due to heavy rain and associated storm surge impacts from Tropical Storm Nate.

Eastman Chemical Explosion, Kingsport, Sullivan County, Tennessee

Key Message: On October 4, 2017, the Eastman Chemical Company in Kingsport, Tennessee reported multiple explosions at its facility accompanied by a release of hydrogen sulfide and other unknown chemicals in the coal gasification process area. Region 4's On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) provided technical assistance and reviewed air monitoring data (there were no constituents of concern detected at the site or fence line). The fire in the coal gasification process is extinguished and the facility is safely shut down and secured. There has been significant national media coverage of this incident.

Region 6

UPCOMING HOT ISSUES AND IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Tropical Storm Nate

Tropical Storm Nate is forecasted to continue strengthening over the Gulf of Mexico and could affect portions of the northern Gulf Coast of the United States as a hurricane this weekend, with direct impacts from wind, storm surge, and heavy rainfall. Some models have the storm making landfall near New Orleans, Louisiana. The State of Louisiana Emergency Operations Center has been partially activated. EPA anticipates sending a representative to the state EOC soon. EPA has begun storm preparations at both Superfund removal actions and Superfund NPL sites within projected impact areas.

Pawhuska School District, Pawhuska, Oklahoma

The Osage Minerals Council reported that the well on the softball field is plugged. As a result of this recent plugging, monitoring of the softball field is ongoing and continues to detect gas readings. Asst. Principal Chris Walker, in conjunction with the OCC, will monitor and document gas readings at the High School and softball field for the next 60 days. The softball field will remain closed during this time. The Oklahoma Corporation Commission OCC requested EPA assistance by collecting soil samples in the plugging area to establish a background on possible oil and gas drilling contaminants. The gas seep technical group will reconvene in 60 days to discuss findings and determine next steps in the process, if needed.

Citizen Potawatomi Nation of Oklahoma

Region 6 is preparing to send the final concurrence package to Headquarters for the approval of the treatment as a state authority (TAS) for Citizen Potawatomi of Oklahoma to administer water quality standards and certification program under the federal Clean Water Act.

Approval of Tonkawa Tribe of Oklahoma and Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma for CWA

Section 319(h) Grants

EPA will approve Treatment As State (TAS) applications for the Tonkawa Tribe of Oklahoma and Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma to receive Clean Water Act funds to monitor water quality and

implement non-point source controls on tribal lands. This approval allows both tribes to be eligible to receive an annual allocation of \$30,000 funding to implement [[HYPERLINK "x-apple-data-detectors://25"](#)] source controls on tribal lands in fiscal year 2018. In the state of Oklahoma, 5 tribes have approved for CWA Section 319(h) funds.

Region 7

Hot Issues

Harvey Support Update

Key Message: Region 7's support for the Hurricane Harvey response continues to be a priority for the Region.

- As the response backup for Region 6, we have to date deployed 62 employees from Region 7 to various locations in Texas to assist with the response – 48 of those employees have returned leaving 14 employees currently deployed.
- R6 has determined an additional deployment of Community Liaisons is not needed and R7 is currently planning to demobilize our 14 Community Liaison positions by October 6th.

Region 8

Hot Issues

Region 8 Responding to the Crow Agency Water Treatment Plant on the Crow Reservation in Montana and Issuing an Emergency Administrative Order Under the Safe Drinking Water Act

Key Message: On October 4, 2017, someone broke into the Crow Agency water treatment facility and damaged it with a shotgun (serving approximately 1,300 persons per day year-round). There have been varying accounts of damage reported by the BIA Police, Crow Agency and the FBI. All sources agree that the chlorine tank was damaged and was leaking from the valve set. The clear well is an open well, so there is also concern over intentional contamination of the drinking water supply.

- The facility was manually shut off yesterday at approximately 8:00 a.m. The water system has provided and distributed door-to-door a Do Not Use advisory. The notice will also be posted in conspicuous locations and announced on the local radio station within 24 hours of receiving the Order. The residents are being provided bottled water.
- Region 8 is working with the EPA Montana Office, EPA Drinking Water Unit, EPA Drinking Water Enforcement Unit, EPA Criminal Investigation Division, OECA, EPA Tribal Assistance Program, the Tribe, the System operator, the FBI, the BIA Police, and numerous other governmental and legal authorities to assist in the investigation, damage assessment, and response.
- Region 8 is supporting the tribe's request for assistance in getting the plant back on-line. In addition, Region 8 is issuing an Emergency Administrative Order to ensure proper system evaluation and startup.

Region 9

Anaconda: last week, we met with our NV DEP partners, BLM, BIA and two tribes. This week, we held detailed talks with NV on our proposed CERCLA NPL deferral agreement (in draft) and our draft administrative consent order. We're making progress in addressing this complex mine site, particularly with regard to groundwater cleanup by Atlantic Richfield/BP. Of several agreements to be forged (with tribes, etc), the deferral agreement and our AO are our current priority and focus.

External Engagement:

Navajo Nation: our Regional Counsel, Sylvia Quast, and Superfund Director, Enrique Manzanilla, will meet with NN President Begaye, NN Vice-President Nez, NN Attorney General Branch and other key Tribal officials next Tuesday and Wednesday to tour the abandoned uranium mines of the Cove Chapter, and meet with residents. In the past year, EPA conducted removal actions at 17 uranium mine sites, replaced 3 contaminated residences, and secured \$600 million in PRP agreements to continue clean-up of NN abandoned uranium mines. We assessed 32 mines in the Cove Chapter and Red valley, including 24 miles of roads and trails and their condition, as well as waste piles, to inform upcoming removals.

Region 10**Upcoming Public Events**

Region 10 and Office of Water Host Pebble Mine/Bristol Bay Public Hearings (Alaska): From October 10– 12, Office of Water and Region 10 leadership will be conducting tribal consultations and hosting public hearings in Alaska on the proposed withdrawal of EPA's 404(c) Proposed Determination regarding the Pebble Mine/Bristol Bay. On September 21, EPA published Public Notices in Alaska newspapers and the Federal Register to announce the public hearings. The public comment and tribal consultation periods end on October 17. We are in close coordination with the Office of Public Affairs regarding the hearings.

Last Week Highlights

Draft Update to NW Arctic Subarea Contingency Plan Out for Comment (Alaska): The Northwest Arctic Subarea Committee, lead jointly by On-Scene Coordinators from USEPA, US Coast Guard, and Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, guides the actions of all three agencies in responding to spills of oil or hazardous substances. The Committee drafted a proposed update to its Subarea Contingency Plan and is currently seeking comments on the plan.

Region 10 Attends Coast Salish Vessel Traffic Summit (Washington): On September 29th Region 10 staff and management attended the Vessel Traffic Summit hosted by the Swinomish and Tulalip Tribes. Speakers included representatives from several state and federal agencies, Tribal leaders and attorneys. Tribal leaders expressed concerns about the cumulative effects of vessel traffic and its infrastructure on tribal Usual and Accustomed harvest areas. Agency presentations provided insights into efforts to reduce the risks of oil spills from vessels. The tribes seemed pleased with the discussions and meeting outcome, and a future gathering is planned for later in the year to solidify the concepts generated.

Office of Administration and Resources Management**Emergency Response Volunteers**

To date, the volunteer response is as follows:

Applications Submitted to FEMA	Deployed	Deployed Pending Check-in	Eligible for Deployment (<i>difference</i>)
111	12	31	47

* 21 additional applications sent on 10/4 (reflected in the total but not status columns).

Applications Submitted to <u>SBA</u>	Deployed	Deployed Pending Check-in	Eligible for Deployment (<i>difference</i>)
12	0	0	0

NOTE:

- EPA volunteers have also being deployed to Puerto Rico.
- Second deployment wave occurred October 4, 2017.
- FEMA Mission Statement doubled the number of volunteers requested, increasing the reimbursable amount to the Agency from \$700,000 to \$1,400,000.
- As volunteer assignments are determined, EPA will finalize an interagency agreement with SBA, a requirement before employees are deployed.

Designation of National Security Positions

Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1400 mandates that agencies evaluate every employee's position to determine its sensitivity in relationship to the potential impact it could have on national security.

Office of Air and Radiation

Upcoming Meetings, Public Events, or Other Public Releases

- **Green Power Leadership Awards:** On October 23, the recipients of the Green Power Leadership awards will be recognized at the Renewable Energy Markets Conference in New York City, New York.
- **SmartWay Excellence Awards:** On October 23, the recipients of the SmartWay Excellence awards will be recognized at the American Truckers' Association Conference in Orlando, Florida.
- **ENERGY STAR Partner Meetings Products, Homes, & Commercial Buildings:** On October 23-25, ENERGY STAR will host the ENERGY STAR Partner Meetings for Products, Homes, & Commercial Buildings in Chicago, Illinois.
- **Natural Gas STAR Annual Implementation Workshop:** On October 24-26, Natural Gas STAR will host their annual implementation workshop in Houston, Texas.

Upcoming Decisions

- **For Administrator's Signature – Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: Greenhouse Gas Emission Guidelines for Existing Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units:** The package is with OP for review prior to submitting it to OMB.

Recap of Past Week

- **Release of Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program 2016 Data:** EPA's GHGRP released its seventh consecutive year of facility-level greenhouse gas data.

- **Release of Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Request for Tribal Proposals:** The solicitation will remain open until January 18, 2018.

Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Hurricane Relief Efforts. OPP is working on an emergency exemption (*i.e.*, Section 18) to legally permit the use of unregistered water purification tablets in Puerto Rico. The World Food Programme donated the water purification tablets, which have not been previously approved for use in the United States. The WFP is initially providing 280,000 tablets, which will provide 5 liters of clean water per day to 800,000 people for a week. Currently the entire island of Puerto Rico is on a Boil Water Advisory, which is complicated by that fact that only 5.4% of power company customers have electricity.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND PUBLIC EVENTS

Visit with the European Chemicals Agency. Deputy Assistant Administrator Dr. Nancy Beck is traveling to Helsinki, Finland, on October 9-11, to meet with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to explore opportunities for collaborations now that we have regulations in place to implement the new TSCA amendments. Discussions will include harmonization, alternative testing, and sharing of chemical information. She will also participate in 2nd APCRA Workshop to discuss advanced approaches to risk assessments.

LAST WEEK HIGHLIGHTS

FDA Issued Final Guidance Clarifying FDA and EPA Jurisdiction Over Certain Mosquito-Related Products. On October 4, FDA announced the availability of the final version of their guidance document on regulatory jurisdiction over certain mosquito-related products including genetically engineered (GE) mosquitoes. This guidance transfers regulatory responsibility for GE mosquitoes used as pesticides to control mosquito populations to EPA.

Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Hot Issues

- OCFO loaded funding available through December 8 provided by the FY 2018 Continuing Resolution. OCFO's CR Guidance memorandum will be issued to the agency next week.
- The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee has delayed markup of its version of the FY 2018 appropriations bill again.
- All FY 2018 Budget Hearing Questions for the Record (QFRs) were submitted to SAC, which will insert into the public Senate hearing record.

Upcoming Public Events

- The draft *FY 2018-2022 EPA Strategic Plan* is available for public comment October 5 through October 31 via the Federal Register Notice and Regulations.gov website.

Last Week Highlights

- OCFO's upgrade of PeoplePlus, the agency's time and attendance system, was launched October 5. In addition to OCFO's regular Help Desk, a Command Center will be activated October 6 to

provide support to the agency during the change period and address technical issues that may arise.

Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

Hurricane Response: OECA, together with OAR, issued a fuel waiver for Puerto Rico to allow the use of high sulfur heating oil and marine fuel in power generators or pumps used for emergency purposes. OECA also revised an earlier No Action Assurance (NAA) to broaden the categories of power generators and equipment for emergency importation into Puerto Rico, and also issued an NAA for the same purpose in the Virgin Islands. Q&A documents on both NAAs, in both English and Spanish, were posted to the Agency's "Hurricane Response" website, as well as a Spanish translation of the NAA for emergency generator importation to Puerto Rico. Finally, an NAA was issued providing flexibility for the Merck company in Puerto Rico to operate power generators for a longer period of time than allowed under its Title V permit, which will help provide additional power on the island. OECA continues to monitor and work with officials in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands on response issues, and is prepared to take any additional actions necessary to facilitate response and recovery efforts.

Upcoming Events: On October 16th, OECA DAA Traylor will be keynote speaker at the American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturer Annual Environmental Conference in Denver, Colorado. The conference will include 350-400 environmental professionals from the refining and petrochemical industries. Open press.

Court Enters Tar Creek Superfund Settlement: On September 26th, the Oklahoma District Court entered a CERCLA Consent Decree (CD) between the United States and NL Industries, Doe Run Resources Corp., and the Department of Interior for the Tar Creek Superfund Site, Oklahoma. The Site includes approximately 40 square miles in northeastern Oklahoma contaminated by lead from historic mining operations. Under the CD, the settling parties are paying over \$15 million to EPA to address claims for Operable Unit (OU) 2 (residential yards), OU 4 (waste piles and streams) and OU5 (sediment) at the Site. The CD also provides for the payment of \$287,000 to the State of Oklahoma. The funds will be used by EPA for the ongoing OU4 work, particularly to address stream contamination. This CD was lodged in 2016, but was held up by Asarco LLC, an intervenor in the case (who previously entered into a \$38.5 million bankruptcy settlement with the United States at the Site) that filed a motion in opposition to the CD. The District Court's opinion and order entering the CD found the CD to be fair, reasonable, and consistent with the goals of CERCLA and the strong policy that favors settlements.

Office of Environmental Information

Acting Assistant Administrator to Testify in Congressional Hearing: "Evaluating the Paperwork Reduction Act: Are Burdens Being Reduced?"

- **Brief description:** On October 11, Acting Assistant Administrator, Steve Fine, will testify in a hearing held by the House Committee on Small Business. This is follow-up to a hearing that was held in March 2017 where small business representatives testified about their concerns with the PRA. Concerns are that the PRA has not been successful in minimizing the amount of federal paperwork on individuals and small businesses.

Office of General Counsel

New Complaints Filed

- NRDC filed a complaint in U.S. District Court for D.C. against Administrator Pruitt and the EPA under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The complaint asserts that EPA has violated the ESA by failing to consult with FWS on the effects to numerous listed species of roughly 100 acetamiprid, dinotefuran and imidacloprid (all neonicotinoids) products. They seek an order requiring EPA to initiate and complete consultation and they seek vacatur of the subject products or other interim relief pending consultation. (*NRDC v. Pruitt*, 1:17-cv-02034)
- On September 22nd, industry and environmental intervenors filed petitions in the D.C. Cir. for panel rehearing and rehearing *en banc* in *Mexichem v. EPA*. The petitions assert that the panel exceeded its subject matter jurisdiction by invalidating a use prohibition contained in the 1994 rule that established the SNAP program. The petitions further assert that EPA did not exceed its statutory authority in promulgating the 2015 SNAP rule that was challenged in this litigation. Since that date, two groups have asked the court for leave to file amicus briefs in support of the rehearing petitions: a group of administrative law professors and a group of states. The court issued an order on October 3rd directing the companies that challenged the 2015 SNAP rule (Arkema and Mexichem) to submit a response to the rehearing petitions no later than October 18th. (*Mexichem v. EPA*, No. 14-1328)

Upcoming Major Deadlines in the Next Two Weeks

- 10/06 Status Report to notify the Court when a proposed TMDL (or TMDLs) will be submitted for the remaining stream segments in Alaska's 1992 impaired waters list for which a TMDL has not yet been prepared nor water delisted due as required by 1992 court order in *Alaska Center for the Environment v. Pruitt*.
- 10/10 First production of documents in *PANNA v. EPA*, a lawsuit arising from two FOIA requests related to chlorpyrifos.
- 10/10 Production of documents due in *PEER v. EPA*, a FOIA case pertaining to OW's response to multiple FOIA requests seeking records related to a draft Protective Action Guide for Drinking Water.
- 10/13 Motion for Summary Judgment is due in *Environmental Integrity Project v. EPA*, a FOIA litigation concerning a FOIA request seeking records pertaining to Administrator Pruitt's meetings with outside parties and records of travel vouchers or expenses.
- 10/18 Production of documents due in *Center for Biological Diversity v. EPA*, a FOIA litigation challenging the remaining withholdings regarding a FOIA request seeking the "revised water quality criteria for cadmium."

Office of Research and Development

Leadership Team: I am pleased to have Jennifer Orme-Zavaleta join us in the ORD Front Office this week to start the ORD leadership transition.

US-German Bilateral Working Group. Today ORD, OLEM and OITA met with German Colleagues as part of the US-German Bilateral Working Group. The goal of the meetings is for our German Colleagues to provide background on a new DE-US.net initiative and discuss potential projects and

activities of mutual interest building on a 25-year relationship under the US German Bilateral Working Group.

Last week Highlights

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Validation Management Group

Last week ORD attended a meeting hosted by the OECD Validation Management Group- Non-Animal and Endocrine Disruptors Testing and Assessment Advisory Group. The OECD works with member countries and stakeholders to cooperatively assess the hazards of industrial chemicals. ORD is providing scientific technical advice and sharing expertise on validation of in vitro assays for evaluating the toxicity of chemicals and using high-throughput in vitro screening to identify potential endocrine disruptors. EPA's participation in these OECD meetings builds international collaborations which helps to leverage global expertise and resources to develop faster and better approaches for assessing chemicals for potential health effects.

Tribal Research

STAR grantee, the [HYPERLINK

"https://cfpub.epa.gov/ncer_abstracts/index.cfm/fuseaction/display.abstractDetail/abstract/10249/report/0"], has completed development of their Yurok Local Environmental Observer as a hub of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Local Environmental Observer Network (LEO). A functioning app is now available for download to both Apple and Android products. The LEO network was developed through support by EPA to the ANTHC, and is "a tool that allows local practitioners of traditional knowledge to capture and share environmental observations and changes." These observations help remote Arctic communities communicate with one another and with experts in universities and governments, and can also be used by industry and other stakeholders to understand the current weather and climatic situation in areas where monitoring data is sparse.

Office of Water

Hurricane Maria Update – Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands

The humanitarian crisis – particularly in Puerto Rico – is severe. Residents in more remote areas are still lacking food, water and medicine. Distribution of these supplies remains a major difficulty. There are reports that the incidence of diseases is increasing, including gastro-intestinal problems and conjunctivitis (particularly in crowded shelters). Drinking water systems have been compromised on all the islands – particularly distribution of finished water. Much of the distribution network relies on electric-powered pump stations and is thus affected by the power outages and lack of fuel for generators. In PR, less than half the population is receiving drinking water through the system; comparable data for the USVI is not available.

Sewage systems were damaged. In PR, half the sewage treatment plants are not operational because of damage to the plants themselves, damage to the trunk lines that bring the sewage to the plants, and/or damage to or lack of electric power at pump stations. Raw sewage discharges are ubiquitous; some discharges enter waterways upstream of drinking water intakes. Residents are using surface waters (rivers, streams, lakes, coastal waters) for washing, potentially exposing them to harmful pathogens from the sewage discharges. EPA, CDC and PR DOH are advising residents not to bathe in surface waters.

EPA Region 2 response efforts are ramping up for Hurricane Maria in both Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The 'Great American West' back-up region group (Regions 8, 9 and 10) has been assigned to support the R2 response. Response efforts for Harvey and Irma have ramped down. EPA Region 2 has established 3 geographic branches in Puerto Rico – north, south and west branches. Regions 8,9, &10 have been assigned to support the west branch with the central staging area being the town of Mayaguez on the west coast. It is anticipated that R8, 9, &10 deployments to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands will begin in earnest on 10/16 and will ramp up for the next two months.

Bristol Bay Update: Lee Forsgren, along with EPA personnel from OW and Region 10, will be in Alaska next week for a series of tribal consultation meetings and public hearings related to EPA's proposal to withdraw its 2014 Clean Water Act Section 404(c) Proposed Determination regarding mining the Pebble deposit, located in the Bristol Bay watershed in southwest Alaska. Consultation meetings are scheduled with tribes and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) Corporations in Anchorage on October 10. Additional consultation meetings with tribes and ANCSA Corporations as well as public hearings are also scheduled for two locations in the Bristol Bay watershed, the villages of Dillingham and Iliamna on October 11 and 12, respectively. The tribal consultation and public comment periods on the proposal to withdraw are set to close on October 17.

Waters of the U.S.: The public comment period closed on the proposed Step 1 rule on September 27. To date, the docket has received approximately 295,000 comments, and 44,000 emails to the Administrator are being transferred to the docket. In support of the Step 2 rule, OW led the third of ten stakeholder outreach webinars on October 3 focused on the conservation community. Next week's webinar will focus on the construction and transportation community. OW continues to hold pre-proposal tribal consultations on the Step 2 rule and will meet with the Coquille tribe on October 5.

39th Meeting of the London Convention: The first two weeks of October OW and OGC will be participating in the 39th meeting of the London Convention /12th meeting of the London Protocol at the International Maritime Organization in London, as a member of the United States Delegation and as a co-chair of the meeting. The Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter of 1972, known as the London Convention, is one of the first international agreements for the protection of the marine environment from human activities. The London Convention (and the London Protocol which is an updated treaty) applies to the deliberate disposal at sea of wastes or other matter from vessels, aircraft, platforms and other man-made structures at sea, as well as to the deliberate disposal at sea of vessels, aircraft, platforms or other man-made structures themselves. The London Convention requires that Contracting Parties, such as the United States, issue a permit for the dumping of wastes and other matter at sea, and generally prohibits the dumping of certain hazardous materials. The agenda for this year's meeting includes development of guidance for evaluating the suitability of certain materials for dumping, consideration of amendments to the Treaty, discussions regarding the interpretation of the Treaty to specific types of wastes, and consideration of possible actions the Parties can take to assist one another (particularly new members and developing countries) to protect the marine environment from dumping.